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AUTHOR Hays, Donald G.
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ABSTRACT

A model program for high school guidance is presented. It is based on the idea that each individual should be provided the maximum opportunities for self-determination. Thus its primary goal is the facilitation of considered decision-making in the students' development of personal and career goals. The model is presented in terms of four steps: the goal, the desired outcomes, the planned programs, and the evaluation. The system is designed as a framework within which each high school can design, plan and manage programs suitable to its own students. (Author/BP)

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THE FULLERTON UNION HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT STUDENT GUIDANCE SYSTEM (SGS)

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The Fullerton Union High School District Student Guidance System (SGS)*

Donald G. Hays

In an attempt to communicate more effectively with the many publics served by the counseling staffs of seven comprehensive high schools and one continuation high school, the counselors of the Fullerton, California, Union High School District began a series of actions leading to the document described in this article. First, a job description of the school counselor was recommended to and adopted by the Board of Trustees. Next, the counselors inventoried the activities they were doing and matched those activities with their job description.

It was during this period of time that accountability became a concern and its impact was felt by our counselors. We proposed to develop a program that was viable, visible, and delivered results—to the best of our ability. A small group of counselors brainstormed many ideas. External activities of many guidance leaders helped to shape our program. The central idea came from the Youth Guidance System work initiated by the late Dr. H. B. McDaniel.

Just as society must continually renew itself in order to survive, so education must renew itself if it is to function as a viable institution within the society. Education has changed over the past several decades. The changes, however, have evolved slowly. Can education afford the luxury of evolving slowly? Some critics say no and point out the need for revolutionary alterations. Recognizing the persistent pessimistic and/or constructive criticism of education and the demand for immediate modification, no changes should be considered unless educators have had a chance to plan systematically for change. We must be sure that we know where we are going—and why.

The Student Guidance System

The Student Guidance System is an approach to renewing district guidance services so that we may better meet the needs of youth during periods of change and confusion. SGS is an *active* program of intervention in the life of an individual who is in the process of discovering and determining personal life and career goals.

Our concept of guidance is that *each* individual shall be provided the maximum opportunities for self-determination. Thus, the primary goal of guidance is the FACILITATION OF CONSIDERED DECISION-MAKING. The determination of which of many options to take requires a continuing stream of decisions—some simple, some complex, some reversible, others irreversible. All require understanding of each of the alternatives, increasing understanding of the many forces of the self, and knowledge and skill in the decision-making process. This concept clearly implies that the facilitation of informed and deliberative decision-making requires that the individual be informed about and consider the full scope of data about himself—physical, social, affective, and cognitive. It requires that he be informed about and consider the full array of data about the environment—social values, career development opportunities, personal and social development opportunities. It also requires that he have the opportunity to learn and practice skills in the complex process of decision-making. Finally, it requires that he accept the responsibility of self-determination; that he have confidence that access to the goals he has chosen will, with reasonable probability, be assured to him in the culture of which he is a part; and that he can accept, and learn from, unsuccessful efforts

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*Based on Youth Guidance System: *A Proposed Model Program for Use in American Secondary Schools.* A Cooperative Project of the California Association of Secondary School Administrators, the California Association of School Administrators, and The College Extrance Examination Board.

Dr. Hays is Administrator, Research and Pupil Services, Fullerton, California, Union High School District and a Past-President of the American School Counselor Association.

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when it is based on his decisions.

SGS suggests a number of different approaches to guidance. Among the distinctive features, SGS . . .

1. Establishes as one major purpose of education the development of students as mature, responsible, self-directing human beings.
2. Affirms the major goal of guidance to be the facilitation of considered decision-making by all students.
3. Provides for a guidance curriculum based on a process of decision-making.
4. Incorporates and integrates an intensive study of student characteristics (including background data, values, interests, learning styles, problems, and goals) with educational-career sub-systems to provide a balanced information base for decision-making.
5. Makes provision for systematic planning and evaluation as major leadership responsibilities of counselors *and* administrators.
6. Utilizes differentiated staffing involving teachers, counselors, paraprofessionals, and support personnel in carrying on the guidance programs.
7. Achieves unity and participation through a broad involvement of students, teachers, administrators, parents and community persons.
8. Accepts and plans for change as a continuing characteristic of the human condition.
9. Seeks to achieve change by more effective use of personnel, new programs, and modern techniques.
10. Provides for accountability through a modified systems approach to guidance programs.

Basic to the operation of SGS is: (a) the recognition, by all personnel, that the primary *goal* of guidance is the facilitation of considered decision-making; (b) the identification of specific *outcomes* indicating progress toward the accomplishment of the goal; (c) the design and implementation of *planned programs* to produce the outcomes; and (d) the *evaluation* of the programs to ensure that the goal is being met.

The Student Guidance System is a framework in which the general intent of the system is defined; parameters for greatest effectiveness are set; campus [high schools] activities are audited; programs are evaluated; and each campus is allowed the freedom and flexibility, within this framework, to design, plan, and manage programs that will assist young people to achieve their optimum potential in a society of rapid change and uncertainty.

Rationale

Accepting the premise that the purpose of education, in its broadest sense, is to provide opportunities and experiences for youth to develop to their optimum potential, all activities performed within the school setting must be designed to accomplish that purpose. We offer a variety of programs to encompass the activities leading to the accomplishment of the goal of education. A program is made up of people, places, and things interacting for a common purpose. A guidance program is as much an integral part of the total school endeavor as are English, mathematics, physical education, and other subject-matter oriented programs.

Two assumptions about people provide the foundation that affects how the Student Guidance System will be designed and implemented:

1. *Most behavior is learned.* If individuals are to behave in appropriate ways, they need to learn appropriate behavior. The inappropriate behavior of youth is due either to their not knowing how to behave appropriately in the situation with which they are confronted, or that they choose to behave inappropriately.
2. *Life is a continuous series of decisions.* Inappropriate decisions can be avoided if the individual is capable of making appropriate decisions. If the student is to make appropriate decisions, then decision-making skills must be learned.

Outcomes

The goal of the Student Guidance System is: TO FACILITATE CONSIDERED DECISION-MAKING IN A STUDENT'S DEVELOPMENT OF PERSONAL AND CAREER GOALS. If a student is capable of accomplishing this goal, optimum potential will be achieved. In order to know how well the student is progressing toward this goal, it is the intent of the staff that at the time of high school graduation, the student will be able to:

1. Attain satisfaction from personally and socially acceptable experiences.

2. Know how to make plans for and to take action in correcting learning, motivational, interpersonal and personal problems.
3. Work toward and realize chosen educational plans.
4. Achieve success in pursuit of satisfying personal career goals.

Programs

Traditionally, counselors have been expected to provide guidance services to all students. While these services usually have been, but were not limited to, individual and/or group counseling, they generally meant "being all things to all people"—an impossible task. The expectations of these services held by key personnel within the school setting—teachers, administrators, students, and parents—have varied. Often the expectations of one group were completely different from the expectations of another group. The counselor, in such a situation, was placed in a dilemma in that if he or she met one group's expectations there was a tendency to antagonize, or at the very least, disappoint the other group. Expectations are based on one's perceptions of counseling and the role of the counselor stemming from personal experiences with counseling and counselors. By offering "services" the counselors tended to present a passive, reactive global, all-encompassing facade to the school staff lending support to the differing expectations. The appearance presented by guidance "services" is one of indecision, a failure of meeting expectations, and a lack of support, or disappointment, in what the counselor was attempting to do.

SGS offers specific programs—developed by counselors—the outcomes of which are viable, visible, and supportive of the common goal of the district. A program, as stated previously, is a combination of people, places, and things brought together and working harmoniously for a common purpose. Each school will develop a comprehensive guidance program, or system, involving the total staff, serving as an umbrella for many guidance sub-programs. All programs will have a purpose, with identifiable stated outcomes, and be able to lend themselves to some form of evaluation in order to ascertain the degree of realization of the outcomes.

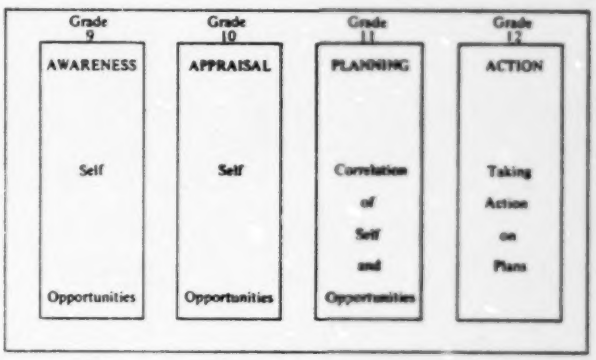
The SGS programs will be sequentially ordered and correlated with other programs offered in the school. All educational programs should be supportive and complimentary to each other. In order to meet the goal of guidance and to insure the successful accomplishment of the stated outcomes, two program approaches will be identified: By grade level and across grade level.

Grade Level Emphasis

Our major concern is with adolescents, ages 14 through 18. Theory, research, and experience indicate that this is an age in which many changes are occurring in the adolescent—physically, emotionally, intellectually, socially, etc. We believe that a sound guidance system provides programs that attempt to deal with these changes, in a sequential manner (See also Figure 1):

Figure 1

Guidance Program Emphasis By Grade Level



Grade Nine
AWARENESS of self and opportunities. Programs will be designed to assist students to be aware of who they are and what is available to them in their environment.

Grade Ten
APPRAISAL of self and opportunities. Programs will be designed to assist students to learn about themselves—their strengths and limitations—and about the opportunities within their environment.

Grade Eleven
PLANNING of activities. Programs will be designed to assist students to make plans based on the correlation between what the student is aware of and knows about himself and what he is aware of and knows about his opportunities.

Grade Twelve
Taking ACTION on plans. Programs will be designed to assist students to take action on their plans as a continuing step to a career commitment.

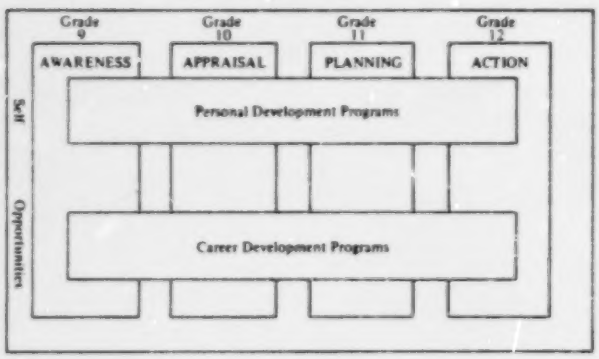
It is recognized that no discrete areas of emphasis will, or can, exist. Our experience with the developing adolescent does give credence to these four major emphases at the grade levels we have indicated. However, some ninth grade students may enter school at the ACTION level and will need little, if any, support of the guidance staff. The existence of these students in a school supports the premise that not all students require the assistance of a counselor On the other hand, some twelfth grade students may still be struggling with who they are and they will need to be involved in programs that will help them to become more aware of themselves. The distinctions presented here are for purposes of illustration and to identify critical periods of providing priority personnel support for needed programs.

Across Grade Level Emphasis

With the major emphasis on the developing adolescent and the opportunities available to him, we have identified two major strands of programs that cross grade levels: Personal and career development programs. Their relationships with the grade level emphasis are illustrated in Figure 2.

Figure 2

Guidance Program Emphasis Across Grade Level



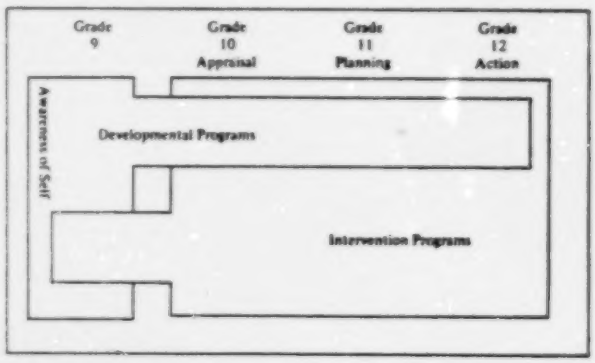
Personal Development Program (PDP)

The Personal Development Program (PDP) is one strand which provides two kinds of sub-programs; developmental and intervention. The concentration is on the individual–the "man" in the concept of "Man and His Environment." These relationships in the SGS are illustrated in Figure 3.

Developmental: Adolescents experience an identity crisis. It is important for them to develop a valid self-awareness and to be taught those skills that will help them to develop into mature, self-determined, self-disciplined adults. A variety of activities would include, but not be limited to, individual and group counseling, group guidance, mini-courses, classroom units or instruction, courses in personal development, etc.

Figure 3

Personal Development Programs



Intervention: Many adolescents encounter problems and they need assistance in solving these problems. These problems can be classified into four major areas: Learning, motivational/ behavioral, social/interpersonal, and personal problems. Intervention activities would include the same kind as those identified under developmental sub-programs with the emphasis on the remediation of an already existing problem.

Career Development Program (CDP)

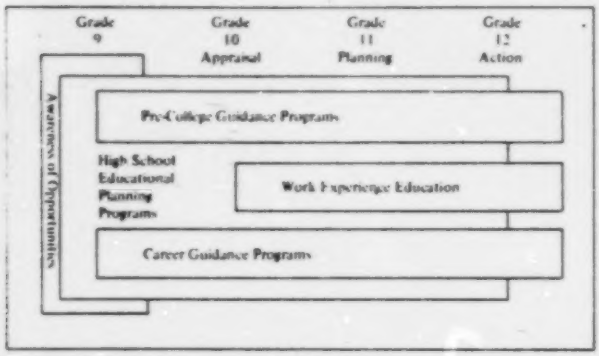
The second major strand in providing continuity across grade levels is the Career Development Program (CDP) with the concentration on the individual's world: The "environment" in the concept of "Man and His Environment." There are four major sub-programs within this strand: High school educational planning, pre-college guidance, career guidance, and work experience education (their inter-relationships are illustrated in Figure 4).

High School Educational Planning: As the student prepares for his future he will need to be aware of the opportunities available to him in high school and the relationship these opportunities have for his future. He will be expected to meet certain requirements that assure the community that he is becoming an educated citizen. He will be able to pursue some of his personal goals. It is the purpose of this sub-program of

CDP that there is an accomplishment of both society's and the student's goals.

Figure 4

Career Development Programs



Pre-College Guidance: Those students who have the potential and the desire will become aware of the opportunities for them in post-secondary education. Many group guidance activities will be planned to bring about this awareness that will lead to the *planning* and *action* phases later in the student's high school year.

Career Guidance: A number of students will seek employment, or some additional training in specific skills, following graduation. In this sub-program, efforts will be made to help those students to become aware of these innumerable opportunities so that appropriate decisions can be made and action take place.

Work Experience Education: Secondary education should be a period of exploration for the student. All youth will eventually embark upon a career. The Work Experience Education subprogram encourages youth to sample the world of work and their place within that world as a means of determining potential career alternatives.

Student Outcomes

Personal Development Programs. The student outcomes for the Personal Development Programs include:

Developmental: For the Student

1. To develop an awareness of personal and social responsibilities, opportunities, and expectancies.
2. To develop an awareness of self in the social setting.
3. To develop an accurate concept of self in the social setting.
4. To develop an effective organization of efforts toward the achievement of satisfying and acceptable social relationships.
5. To cope constructively with the demands of social groups with which he is affiliated.
6. To attain personal satisfaction from socially acceptable experiences.
7. To consistently demonstrate personal and social adequacy.

Intervention: For the Student

1. To be able to communicate an awareness of a problem.
2. To be able to communicate plans for correcting the problem.
3. To be able to take action for correction of the problem.
4. To be able to reduce or eliminate the problem.

Career Development Programs. The student outcomes for the Career Development Programs include:

High School Educational Planning and Pre-College Guidance: For the Student

1. To develop an awareness of the educational setting.
2. To develop an awareness of self in the educational setting.
3. To develop an accurate concept of self in the educational setting.
4. To develop an effective organization of work toward the achievement of educational goals.
5. To cope constructively with the demands of the educational environment.
6. To attain personal satisfaction from educational experiences.
7. To work toward and realize chosen educational plans.

Work Experience Education:

For the Student

1. To explore a variety of career opportunities.
2. To discover and recognize his aptitudes and interests.
3. To become familiar with the complexity of tasks that comprise a job.
4. To recognize the relationship between job requirements and school subjects.
5. To apply classroom knowledge and experience to actual job performance.
6. To recognize his suitability, or lack of it, for an occupational field.
7. To develop efficient and productive work habits.

Career Guidance:

For the Student

1. To develop an awareness of the world of work.
2. To develop an accurate career self-perception.
3. To develop an accurate concept of self in relation to the world of work.
4. To develop an effective organization of work toward the achievement of career goals.
5. To effectively implement his career choice.
6. To derive personal satisfaction from the pursuit of a career.
7. To achieve success in the pursuit of career goals.

Evaluation

It is important that all programs do contribute to the purposes for which they are intended. Unless evaluation or assessment is planned as an integral part of the program, there can be no way of determining the program's effectiveness. The effectiveness and the flexibility of the Student Guidance System is dependent upon the feedback of the users of the system in meeting both the society's and the individual's goals. Each campus is expected to incorporate an evaluation design in each program it offers. Annually, each campus will report the results of the evaluation activities to the District administrative staff using the format illustrated in Figure 5.

Figure 5

STUDENT GUIDANCE SYSTEM
Evaluation Report

Strand – Program

Title	Grade	No. of Students	Person Responsible

Effectiveness	Planned for Next Year

STUDENT OUTCOMES

Expected	Actual

Activities

In Conclusion

The model is a framework only. The degree of implementation is dependent upon the readiness of the counseling staffs of each school. There is flexibility within the framework to allow a wide range of approaches for the accomplishment of our primary goal. Now we need to provide professional growth activities for those counselors whose skills have atrophied and need to be renewed for activating the model. We need to get commitment from our administration that the best defense of our educational program is a good offense which the model provides.

The model works. We have seen positive results during the first year with the initiation of 119 separate programs on seven campuses and 90% of them evaluated as being highly effective.

The model is open-ended and we will continue to develop the concepts identified. Institutional and self-renewal is a continuous process. We must continue to change as time and situation changes.